

Remarks

Claims 1-36 are pending in this application. Claims 1-36 now stand rejected. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration in view of the following remarks.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-6, 10, 12-19, 24, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2001-220805 A (hereinafter *Miyagami*).

Claim 1 recites a drain socket with a plurality of thin plate-like straightening vanes, each having a finite thickness. This element is not taught by *Miyagami*. The Examiner points to Fig. 21 (reproduced below) of *Miyagami* and refers to 173 as the thin plate-like straightening vanes. The elements 173 are completely different from the claimed plate-like straightening vanes. Fig. 21 of *Miyagami* illustrates portions cut out from a tubular portion 170 illustrated in Fig. 20 (also reproduced below).

As shown in Fig. 20 and the associated description, the tubular portion 170 has a bevel surface 175a, a choke portion 173 downstream of the bevel surface, and a recess portion 178 vertically extending through the tubular portion 170. As shown in the Figs. below, the tubular portion 170 has a cross section taken along the added line A-A in Fig. 20. Accordingly, the portions designated as 173 in Fig. 21 are merely portions of the tubular wall of the "choke portion" 173 rather than the plate-like straightening vanes of the claimed invention. As seen in Fig. 20, the choke portion 173 refers to both sides of the tubular portion 170, not just the left side (as may have been assumed by looking at Fig. 21). The choke portion 173 does not have a "finite thickness" or extend in an inward direction of the channel.

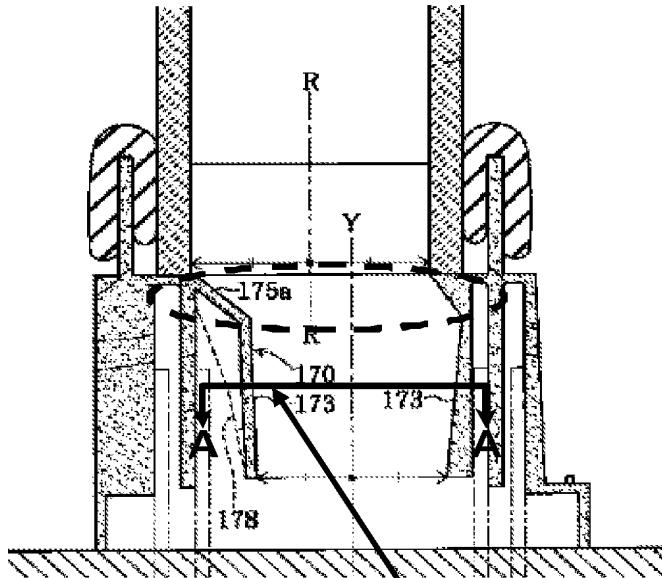


Fig. 20 in Miyagami

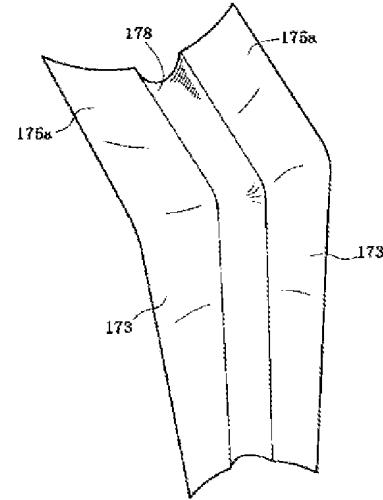
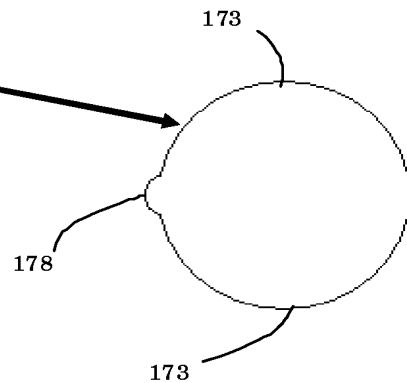


Fig. 21 in Miyagami



Sectional view taken along the line A-A in Fig. 20

Furthermore, the drain socket of the claimed invention has a "siphon inducing region" downstream of the plate-like straightening vanes. In contrast, the drain socket 160 illustrated in Figs. 20 and 21 of *Miyagami* does not include a "siphon inducing region" downstream of elements 173. The Examiner points to element 74 (roughly located in the circled area above) as the siphon inducing region, which is located either upstream of where elements

173 would be in Fig. 20 (as shown in Figs. 11-14), or at best at the same level as 173, but certainly not downstream.

Claim 4 recites that the drain socket further comprises a channel expansion section in which an inside diameter of the drain socket body generally increases in a direction from the outlet towards the drain pipe and that the straightening vanes are provided in the channel expansion section. The choke portion 173 of *Miyagami* is part of the tubular portion 170, and is therefore located within a section that is contracting, not expanding as required by claim 4. The right side of tubular portion 170 is clearly narrowing, as shown by Fig. 20. Applicant is unclear whether the Examiner is referring to claim 4 when he refers to intended use and other functional phrases (last paragraph of page 2, instant Office Action), but Applicant argues that the channel expansion section of claim 4 is positively recited and therefore not functional or intended use.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 and 4 are not anticipated by *Miyagami*. Claims 2-3, 5-6, 10, 12-19, 24 and 26 are ultimately dependent from claim 1 and are therefore patentable for at least the same reasons as above, as well as for their own individual limitations.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7-9, 11, 20-23, 25, and 27-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Miyagami* in view of JP 08326136 A (hereinafter *Yosuke*) as set forth in the previous Office Action.

Claims 7-9, 11, 20-23, and 25 are dependent from claim 1. As shown above, *Miyagami* does not teach all the limitations of claim 1. *Yosuke* does not rectify these deficiencies, specifically it does not teach a plurality of thin plate-like straightening vanes, each having a finite thickness, located upstream of the siphon inducing region. Accordingly,

Applicant respectfully submits that said claims are patentable over *Miyagami* in view of *Yosuke* and requests the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) to said claims.

Claim 27 recites a drain socket comprising a plurality of deflector plates, each having a finite thickness, extending in an inward direction from an inner wall of the channel expansion section. Similar to the plate-like straightening vanes of claim 1, *Miyagami* does not teach the plurality of thin deflector plates of claim 27. As discussed above, the portions designated as 173 in Fig. 21 of *Miyagami* are portions cut out from a tubular portion 170 illustrated in Fig. 20 rather than deflector plates. *Yosuke* does not rectify these deficiencies of *Miyagami* in teaching all the elements of claim 27.

Claims 28-36 are dependent from claim 27 and are therefore patentable for at least the same reasons as above, as well as for their individual limitations. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 27-36 are patentable over *Miyagami* in view of *Yosuke* and requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) to said claims.

Conclusion

Applicant has made a genuine effort to respond to each of the Examiner's objections and rejections in advancing the prosecution of this case. Applicant believes that all formal and substantive requirements for patentability have been met and that this case is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. If any additional issues need to be resolved, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at his earliest convenience.

The Petition fee of \$130.00 is being charged to Deposit Account No. 02-3978 via electronic authorization submitted concurrently herewith. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments as a result of the filing of this paper to Deposit Account No. 02-3978.

Respectfully submitted,

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